

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

APRIL 15, 2008

DENTAL ASSESSMENTS AT MEDICAL HUBS FOR CHILDREN

On February 14, 2008, I convened a Child Welfare Dental Summit where private and public agency leaders countywide came together to brainstorm solutions to the tremendous need that children have for dental care. Poor oral health is the most common chronic childhood disease. Severe dental neglect in children has led to serious illness and even death. Fortunately, most dental problems can be easily diagnosed and treated.

We currently have Medical Hubs countywide where children suspected of abuse or neglect receive both medical screenings and examinations. While Hub physicians also perform dental screenings, they refer those children whom they determine in need of full dental examinations to community dentists outside of the Hubs. This procedure may culminate in inconsistent dental examination results and consequent dental treatments.

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Severe dental neglect constitutes child abuse. Therefore, it is essential to make dental examinations by qualified dentists available at the Medical Hubs. Fortunately, the Summit revealed readily available private and public resources that, through partnership with the County, carry the potential of making the provision of dental examinations through Medical Hubs cost-neutral to the County.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Office, in consultation with the Departments of Children and Family Services and Health, to report back in 90 days, and quarterly thereafter, on the feasibility of including dental examinations as part of the Medical Hub screening and assessment procedures by:

1. Developing public/private partnerships with the County to ensure that dental examinations for children involved in the child welfare system remains cost-neutral to the County;
2. Determining the availability of space at each medical hub to conduct dental examinations and the equipment, staffing and other resources that can be made available to the County through the public/private partnerships; and
3. Developing an effective dental services network and referral process for follow-up dental care following a child's screening and examination at each Medical Hub.

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